

Draft Statement of Accounts 2020/21

Summary:	This report presents to the Committee the draft Statement of Accounts for the 2020/21 financial year. These are for the Committee to note, in advance of approval of the final audited version at a date to be confirmed.
Options considered:	No options are applicable
Conclusions:	The Council's assets should be regularly reviewed to ensure they generate a service or other benefit to the District, and that they are financially sustainable.
Recommendations:	That the Committee note the contents of the draft Accounts
Reasons for Recommendations:	To enable more effective Member scrutiny of the Council's financial performance and Accounts.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

(Papers relied on to write the report, which do not contain exempt information and which are not published elsewhere)

Cabinet Member(s)	Ward(s) affected
Cllr Eric Seward	All

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report presents the draft Statement of Accounts for 2020/21 for the Committee to note in advance of approving the final audited Accounts at a date currently to be confirmed.
- 1.2 The Council prepares its Accounts in line with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Local Authority Accounting. In recent years, the Council has been required to publish draft Accounts by 30th May and audited Accounts by 31st July. Last financial year, due to the effects of the COVID 19 pandemic on finance staff, and the recommendations of the Redmond Review, this was postponed to 31st August and 30th November respectively. This financial year the statutory deadline for the publication of draft Accounts was 31st July. The Council complied with this deadline and the Accounts were published on the Council's website on Friday 30th July.

2. Changes to the format of the Accounts

- 2.1 This year's Statements make reference to effects of the COVID 19 pandemic on the Council's finances and financial Statements. Note 41 – Material/Unusual

items of Income and Expense – is a new note which aims to explain to users of the accounts where they might see these effects. This is the main change to the format of the Accounts for 2020/21.

- 2.2 Due to the delay in implementation of IFRS 16 Leases by CIPFA, there were no changes in accounting policies during the year.

3. Audit dates

- 3.1 The Council does not currently have an indicative date for the commencement of the audit of these accounts. Due to historical resourcing issues, the 2019/20 audit is due to commence on 6th December 2021. The 2020/21 audit will follow that, but as yet it is not clear when this will be. The auditors require planning time between the end of one audit and commencement of the next; this and auditor availability will dictate when the audit will take place.

4. Conclusion

It is recommended that the contents of this report and the draft Statement of Accounts are noted.

5. Implications and Risks

There are reputational and financial risks to the Council if its Statement of Accounts are not prepared on time in draft or final format. The Council has met the statutory deadline for publishing a set of draft accounts, but will miss the publishing deadline for the final audited version due to auditor availability. The Council will publish a notice on its website to that effect.

6. Financial Implications and Risks

There are no direct financial implications surrounding the publication of the Statement of Accounts. The Accounts deal with historical information only, rather than future forecasts. The Local Government sector benefits from statutory overrides which protect the taxpayer from cash based consequences of choice of accounting policy in many instances.

7. Sustainability

None as a direct consequence of this report

8. Equality and Diversity

None as a direct consequence of this report.

9. Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations

None as a direct consequence of this report.